

Chapter 9: Garments of Fire Will Be Cut Out for Them

As far as the eye could see, asphalt and concrete bathed in sickly orange streetlight. The demon in the mirror parked His old Honda civic in the middle of a parking lot. It was bruised and battered and filled to the brim with plastic boxes. He was a bit of a hoarder, collecting a thousand things for His woodworking. Without an owner, the demon sold most of it, but there was still some worthless garbage that had to be destroyed.

“Finish the mission,” the *shayāṭīn* commanded, their shadows stretching far across the asphalt. “Hurry, before you fail to see it through a second time.”

The winter chill cut through the demon to the bone. By now the seasons changed enough to make the leather jacket insufficient. The demon looked up at the sky, but it was completely pitch black, covered in amorphous purple clouds.

The demon unzipped a backpack and took out its contents: a metal tray, a stack of newspapers, and a couple water bottles filled with a straw-yellow fluid.

It was nerve wracking to fill the jug. Every glance from the clerk was accusatory, as if he sensed the demon’s true nature. In the end, he failed to notice or chose not to care. Despite that, the walk back home was haunted by distant police sirens just too quiet to be heard unambiguously.

It set the tray on the asphalt and poured out a bottle. After some flicks of a lighter, it set the mixture alight, adding the newspaper to sustain it. The flickering red and orange flames were

much smaller and quieter than anticipated since the demon had only ever been exposed to fire through movies. So, it added more fuel, allowing the flame to slowly grow into an inferno sufficient to burn all sins to ash.

In the first box were old clothes. Socks. Shirts. Underwear. Sweatpants. Bed sheets. Smoke billowed forth when they were cast into the flame.

But at the bottom was something else. Articles of clothing made of nylon. Skin cream, exfoliators, sunscreen, nail polish, and lipstick. Pink razors, shaving cream, gels, and several objects wrapped in many plastic bags, including one that was cylindrical in shape.

“A dildo,” the demon in the mirror cursed. “Pathetic.”

I did not purge all evidence of her existence from this world. There were many times when I tried to purge her *nafs*, but the process was not straightforward. I purged her, lived without her, gave into her carnal fantasies, purged her again, and lived without her a bit longer, until I slowly but surely convinced myself that I did not need her or anything she represented. Then, after deciding once and for all who I was, she took control for an hour, so I resolved to reject her perverted disgusting fantasies for another year. This process ended up wasting a couple hundred dollars. One day, beset by licentious fantasies, she purchased her depraved objects (we used a PO box and an alias to make sure the delivery was not a risk). After they were purged, the same thing happened, though she knew to buy less, and to buy inconspicuous objects that could be passed off as knick-knacks and paperweights. She did not keep a diary or journal and made sure her internet activity was entirely separate and secure and easily rendered inaccessible (as far as she was aware). But that did not stop us from checking the door ten times every time to make sure it was locked for certain, nor did it stop us from religiously checking for some mistake in

our online activity.

Her objects were first hidden in a bag high up in a closet behind old blankets. Then they were kept in separate locations, the most inconspicuous stuff joining the rest of the forgettable clutter in my drawers (the idea being that if He looked, they would not stand out enough to imply a sexual capacity). The more ... cylindrical stuff was hidden deep within a dark cabinet behind several clothes, with the female razors in front of the clothes to catch any unwanted attention (the idea being that if He looked there, the female razors would take up all His attention, so if He innocently questioned me about it, I could take it as a sign of oncoming suspicion and quickly purge everything before He searched for more examples of strange behaviour). But none of that really dissuaded the fear that one day He might search through everything, perhaps because He lost something and looked everywhere to find it. If He searched too thoroughly in the wrong place, it would all come crumbling down. I tried to imagine what to do in such a scenario, but I could not imagine any outcome that did involve violence and at least one of our deaths.

I ended up leveraging His hoarding tendencies. When we lived in the three-bedroom apartment, He once transferred a part of His horde to a locker in the building's basement. I later added a plastic box to the locker. He never went down to there again, and if it was cleared out, that plastic box would be thrown out. It was at just the right distance for her to survive, though in an emaciated form. I thought of it as analogous to a narrow gap in an embargo around an island.

When we moved to the one-bedroom apartment, I decided that it was time to limit her to my dreams. But the demon in the mirror decided to finish the job. It was surprised to find the locker undisturbed.

It tossed the nylon stockings and lingerie into the fire. As far as the demon was concerned, they represented nothing more than an insult to women who suffer everyday from

fetishization, objectification, the male gaze, and patriarchal violence. It already proved itself incapable of helping the one woman in its life who ever loved it, so how could it help any others, except through self-destruction? It did not care to consider any alternatives.

But the flame warped and bent, forming abstract images. Lines. Ovals. Wavy hair. Then round eyeglasses.

“Our feelings are normal,” the maiden said. “Trans women often go through a phase of hyper femininity when we’re forced to hide and when we feel insecure. Imagine how much cis women already struggle to figure out themselves in this world that teaches us to devalue ourselves and satisfy the whims of old, white, entitled men. We often mellow out once we gain confidence and figure out the kind of woman, non-binary, and gender-fluid person we want to be.”

The demon in the mirror did not answer. It threw the lipstick and nail polish into the fire. As far as the demon was concerned, they represented nothing more than a crude imitation of femininity. Anyone who saw her in her clown makeup would surely laugh before beating her to death. Of course, that was because she could never turn to her mother for help and guidance, but the demon in the mirror did not care about the why behind why she would be left for dead in a ditch. It did not believe in the benevolence of mankind enough to consider alternative scenarios either.

“And even if we return to this—”

“Masturbation,” the demon in the mirror interrupted.

“Even if we return to this masturbation, we do not need to be ashamed of ourselves.

Hundreds of millions of people out there have kinks even more intense and problematic than us.”

The demon in the mirror did not answer. Around middle school I was made to attend

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madrasa (Islamic school) classes after school. The students read and memorized the *Qur'ān* and *du'ā'* and received instructions on the basics of Islam. I sucked at the *Qur'ān* and *du'ā'* (I hated my Arabic voice even more than I hated my normal voice), but I was the best in *'aqā'id* (belief), *akhlāq* (character), *adab* (decency/morals/manners), and *fiqh*. In one of those classes, we were instructed that those who “commit *zinā* with their hands are accursed,” and that their hands will be pregnant on the Day of Judgement.¹ Regardless of the dubious authenticity of these instructions, the imagery of my flesh disgusted me. She also had her own standards, constantly annoyed by the race play, erotic humiliation/degradation, and hierarchical play common in Western porn and erotica. Getting gender euphoria from that was like getting nutrition from McDonalds. In any case, her worldview was still so wildly different from my own that her memories were soon forgotten, her emotions disintegrating in the abyss.

“Do you remember how we used to exercise?” the maiden pleaded. “We pushed ourselves for an hour every morning, and it made our breakfast taste so much better. We took pictures to track our progress, and we realized that we felt ugly because the exact same person can look masculine or feminine depending on the pose, camera angle, and lightning.”

The demon in the mirror did not answer. It grabbed the plastic bag, holding it out just beyond the fire.

“We then realized that developing our abs and back muscles would make us feel more feminine, so we added planks and push-ups to our routine. Our arms were too weak back then, but in a month, we were strong enough to complete our routine without any breaks. It wasn't much compared to others, but for us at least, it felt like we no longer filled ourselves with hatred.”

The demon in the mirror did not answer. In the red and orange flames, it could make out

the imprints of some of the objects. That bag did not just contain a dildo. It contained cages, plugs, clamps, collars, gags, vibrators, cleaning supplies, and worse.

“It’s like Weber’s queer logics of statecraft. We do not have to be rigidly bound by the need to appear normal. We can combine normality with perversion however we like, thriving in the ambiguous borderlands of our identities.”²

“You would turn sex toys into a philosophy,” it chuckled before casting the plastic bag and everything it contained into the fire. These objects represented nothing more than a pathetic secret that did not deserve to exist, or at least that is what it told itself.

The maiden became crestfallen, but only for a moment.

“This is real philosophy,” she insisted. “The nihilistic politics against trans people today will completely disappear in a hundred years. But it is up to us to make sure we have a place in that future. Just from a cursory reading of Jessica Hinchy’s *Governing Gender and Sexuality in Colonial India: The Hijra, c.1850-1900*, we learned how *hijrās* endured the same politics. They lived in discipleship lineages, some were castrated (though it was not required), and they worked in public performance and migratory alms-collecting, but also in conventional fields like agriculture, trading, and weaving.³ In the 1850s, British Raj officials drummed up a moral panic in the Northwestern Provinces, claiming that *hijrās* were an obscene presence in public spaces and that their discipleships supposedly abduct, castrate, and prostitute children.⁴ Upper-middle class Indians at the time ate up and promoted this dehumanizing rhetoric,⁵ but the *hijrās* resisted these cynical attempts at colonial control.⁶ There is integrity in standing up for what is right just as those before us did. Just as the trans activists before us did, like Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson. Without them, these Western countries would still be as Victorian as they were on days they were founded.⁷ There is integrity in demanding that people today deserve lives that are

worth living, in this world and the next.”

The maiden’s voice took on a feverish pitch, hoping that something it said was getting through.

“We didn’t always hate our skin,” the maiden asserted. “We used to shave it in the shower and used skin cream to reduce irritation. We realized that there was this one lotion that seemed to reduce blemishes and stretch marks. Do you remember?”

The demon in the mirror did not answer. It gathered all the creams, exfoliators, gels, sunscreens, razors, and shaving cream, including the lotion the maiden praised.

“Do you remember how one day we noticed the morning sun reflecting in our skin? How our smooth skin looked like burnished bronze, and we did not hate its colour or how our thighs were covered in scars? Surely, we were on the right path. Surely, we can find that path again.”

The demon in the mirror tossed it all into the fire, where the shaving cream exploded. It represented nothing more than an idiot girl’s pipedreams, or at least that is what it told itself.

The rest of the boxes contained ordinary things. Unsold clothes, hangars, rulers, screwdrivers. Some notes from university. Report cards and certificates from school. One contained several jars of mold. I once tried to recreate His pasta recipe, which He picked up while working day in and day out at an Italian restaurant. I did not make it properly. Was the stove too hot? Did I mix the sauce well enough? Did I put in enough oil when boiling the pasta to keep it from sticking? Did I let the pasta boil long enough? Did I let it boil too long? Was I cutting the onions and mushrooms and garlic wrong? I made something edible despite my doubts, but it was not the same without Him.

Whenever we cooked pasta, He would kiss the side of my forehead and tell me I was the

greatest boy in the world. I think He saw me no differently from the toddler He once cooed to decades ago. And yet, somewhere along the way the demon in the mirror must have decided that what He said when He was angry was what He felt authentically. Everything else was just a delusion He said to convince Himself to keep me around. The migraines that came every time the demon thought about that prevented it from trying again.

The mold burned black.

The fumes disoriented the demon in the mirror, like the earth was turning without it. But the demon kept going, taking out a box filled with stacks of paper and plastic. The documents and cards were no longer necessary. Health cards. Coupons. Licenses. Insurance. Passports. Evidence that He existed.

“It is never too late,” the maiden insisted.

“It is always too late,” the towering *shayāṭīn* demanded.

The demon in the mirror started tossing the cards into the flame one by one.

“People far older than us have transitioned. They made the leap of faith and came out a better person.”

The demon in the mirror tossed their driver’s license.

“People far worse than us are working on their mistakes,” the maiden continued.

“Through hard work and dedication, they at least try to make this world a better place. Surely, a life like that is better than this.”

“Who cares,” the demon in the mirror said, tossing its passport into the flame.

“Who cares?” the maiden asked incredulously.

The maiden tried to maintain the mask she wore for the sake of respectability, but it all shattered in the face of such nihilism.

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“There is no justice in this! This does nothing to improve the wellbeing of anyone in this world. Someone is going to end up inhaling these fumes and some underpaid worker is going to be forced to clean up this mess.”

“Tough shit.”

“How long ago was it when our spooky scary friends convinced us that this was the path of integrity and accountability, while everything I said was selfish immorality? Huh?”

The demon in the mirror did not answer.

“They lied to us!” the maiden yelled.

“They used our sense of duty against us! They used our love against us!”

“They convinced us to suffer more than we deserved!”

“They convinced us that we were in more control than we were!”

“We lost everyone we ever loved because of them, and we’re losing everything we have left because you keep listening to them!”

I did not answer.

“We must let go of their nihilistic ideology. Their ideology has no integrity. Their ideology crumbles under scrutiny. Their ideology is nothing more than a bastardization of Islam. *Qad. Certainly. Khasira -lladhīna qatalū awlādahum.* Lost are those who killed their children. *Safahan bighayri ‘il’m.* Foolishly, without knowledge. *Waḥarramū mā razaqahumu l-lahu f’tirāan ‘alā l-lah.* And forbidding that which has been provided to them by *Allāh*—inventing lies against *Allāh*. *Qad ḍallū wamā kānū muh’tadīn.* Certainly, they have gone astray and were not guided.”⁸

The demon did not answer, for it knew how the *munāfiqūn* would absolve themselves of their sins.

“This verse only refers to the newborn girls who were buried alive because of the shame and poverty attached to daughters in the *Jāhilīyya*.⁹ Metaphor does not matter.”¹⁰

“How many trans daughters do we bury alive, forbidden from taking a single breath free to be themselves? We cannot be led astray by ignorant people who attach shame and poverty to trans daughters. We must banish their ideological disease before it destroys the rest of our soul.”

The demon did not answer, for it found the last item. His passport.

It should have just tossed His passport in, but it opened the passport to His photo. His government identifications changed over the years. An old piece of identification from His country contained a man with dark, coiled black hair and a buttoned-up shirt—a young Bengali man who would do whatever it took to support His family. When He first adopted the *salafiyya* worldview, He wore a white *thawb* with a checkered *kūfiyya* wrapped around His head. But since passport photos are designed to be anti-photogenic, it made Him look like an Islamist taking a mugshot. He then scaled it back a bit, wearing a buttoned-up shirt with a *ṭopī* on His head, His wrinkles, crow’s feet, and long white beard attesting to the journey that sent Him there.

In the light of the fire, the demon noticed every sign of aging, worn down from decades of sacrifice. The demon’s vision went blurry, and it fell to its knees.

It still did not cry, but the sickening lurching sensation across its body was overwhelming, as if the pit in one’s stomach when one feels dread became a permanent fundamental emotion as strong as anger, joy, fear, and anguish.

“Worthless degenerate idiot,” the *shayāṭīn* condemned, dripping with disgust.

The demon resisted their demand.

“For once in your pathetic subhuman life do not fail.”

“Hurry, before you fail the rest of the world again.”

“Do not fail them again.”

“Do not fail them all like you failed your entire family.”

His face blackened as the passport curled and turned black, melting like ice in the summer sun. The moment it did this, the demon in the mirror tried to sketch His face in its mind, but the exact details already escaped its memory, His face losing definition with every passing second.

“What is the point in trying anymore?” the demon in the mirror demanded. “Is someone going to hug me and tell me this hell is over while I sob like a child?”

“Hah! I am too broken to cry. Too broken to cry when my mother was lowered into the earth. Too broken to cry when my father was lowered into the earth. Just do the world a favour and leave already.”

“What if one of our cousins or nieces or nephews are not going through similar struggles?” she inquired. “What if the only thing they need is someone in our family to set a precedent? Do you really think leaving them alone in this hell of a world is going to do them a favour?”

The demon in the mirror laughed.

“I would just end up killing them. Just as I killed Him ... and just as I killed my own mother.”

“It is in your very nature to kill everything you touch,” the *shayāṭīn* added.

“No!” the maiden roared.

“Do not listen to their lies. It is not too late. It is never too late. Just think of all we have left to offer to this world.”

The demon in the mirror snickered at the suggestion. It crawled back to His car and slammed the door shut.

“Take an issue like Palestine,” the maiden continued frantically. “Everyone seems to be stuck in polarized arguments pitting Jews against Muslims. It seems inevitable. After all, what other real sanctuaries exist for Jewish people in this antisemitic world except the state of Israel? Is it not inevitable for them to defend the only country in this world that protects them thanks to the dedication of their parents and grandparents?”

The demon in the mirror shook its head, trying to shut out her desperation.

“This does not justify genocide, and we are certain that the only reason anybody does not call it genocide is because identity without integrity enables the bending of reality. What this means is that identity must be directly addressed. One can imagine how psychologically difficult it is to choose between defending genocide and betraying the parents and grandparents who sacrificed everything for the sake of one’s Israeli citizenship.”

The demon in the mirror turned the keys in the ignition, but the engine sputtered out. It tried again and again and again, but it still did not work. It cursed under its breath while opening the door again.

“You remember how we started wondering if there were commonalities between our struggles over identity, right? The relationship between Jews and Israel is probably even more dysfunctional than our relationships with Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia demands us to be anti-*Shī‘a*, anti-*Şūfī*, and *Salafist* to maintain the ideological borders granting us “divine” citizenship. But Israel demands that Jews be anti-Palestinian, anti-Orthodox,¹¹ and colonialist¹² to maintain the literal borders granting them literal Israeli citizenship. The same process leading us out of the *Salafiyya* ideology despite the perceived betrayal of our father might connect to

Jews in a similar identity puzzle.”

The demon in the mirror clicked its tongue when it opened His car’s hood. He had somehow figured out how to fix cars, but the demon was too stupid. It fumbled with everything inside in a futile attempt to make anything work.

“Sure, we haven’t done enough research to concretely connect these things together,” the maiden conceded. “But the cursory reading we have already done looks promising.”

The demon slammed its fist against the engine block, unleashing expletive after expletive. He tried to teach it something useful about car engines. When the Honda Civic had previous issues with the wiring of its lights, the demon shown a flashlight while He talked about His process for fixing those issues. But none of it could be recalled, only the vague feeling of trying to hold the flashlight right to make sure He did not get angry.

“Just look at our own people. Genocide has been attempted against us, but we have also attempted genocide against others. For us, it is against the *ādibāsi* (aboriginal inhabitants) of Bangladesh’s Southeastern Chittagong Hill Tracts district. They are predominantly comprised of the Buddhist Sino-Tibetan *Chakmas*, alongside Hindu and Christian and Animist ethnic groups like the *Marmas*, *Tipperas*, *Murungs*, *Tanchaungs*, *Kamis*, *Reangs*, *Lusheis*, *Bawn*, *Khumi*, *Sak*, and *Pangkhua*.”¹³

The demon’s hands were covered in grease and dust and oil. Huffing and puffing with rage, it released its anger on inconspicuous caps and plugs and pipes, twisting and pulling and breaking them at random.

“When these groups pushed for regional autonomy, just as our country did when it was part of Pakistan, our country’s leaders denied them, just as Pakistan’s leaders denied us. Our country’s leaders, like Pakistan’s leaders, were too wrapped up in colonial and ethnic chauvinist

mindsets.¹⁴ So the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts began to politically identify as the *Jummā* (named for the *jhum* agricultural practice in Chittagong, not the Islamic Friday prayer), and from 1975 until 1997, ethnic Bengalis started settling into the Hill Tracts while the state waged a war against the *Jummā* in what some call a ‘creeping genocide.’”¹⁵

The demon in the mirror got back in His car, dirtying His steering wheel with engine grease. It put the key in the ignition and turned. The engine sputtered out. It turned again. The engine sputtered out. It tried again and again, turning harder and harder as if it just had to get some forbidden technique to make the engine work.

“Many of them were forcibly resettled into villages close to army camps for surveillance, which increased harassment, arrests, abductions, torture, forced marriage, and sexual assault by army personnel. Those soldiers committed massacres and burned houses as reprisals on those who attacked army camps and Bengali settlers, creating tens of thousands of *Jummā* refugees living in camps in India.¹⁶ Eventually, the government came to a settlement, but did not investigate the massacres or abductions, did not rehabilitate refugees, and did not restore land confiscated from them during the war. The region remains under continued militarization.¹⁷ There must be a connection between the *Jummā* and the Palestinians and the rest of the Indigenous peoples in this world. Surely, we have something to contribute to the conversation.”

After turning the key in the ignition for the thirtieth time, the demon in the mirror realized His car was worthless without Him.

“Enough!” the demon in the mirror exclaimed.

It took the key in its fist, the tip pointing out like brass knuckles, and punched the rearview mirror until it shattered.

“I know what you are trying to do.”

Kicking the door open, the demon punched the side mirrors until they broke.

“You cannot keep distracting me with books.”

It opened the hood again, fiddling around until it wrenched a sparkplug from the engine block. It saw those videos and vaguely remembered the technique.

“Nobody cares. People do not have ‘conversations.’ They expel their hatred and resentment into some target on social media. There are industries worth hundreds of billions of dollars dedicated to weaponizing the collective human spirit against itself. I should have just killed myself instead of maintaining this delusional hope that someone will think we had enough value to be loved if I read enough books.”

It slammed a fist with the sparkplug jutting out, but the window did not shatter. It cursed, and it tried again and again, turning the sparkplug around and angling it. Over and over until it finally figured out the proper technique to shatter the tempered glass. It then went through all the glass in the car, shattering everything which functioned as a mirror until blood flowed from its knuckles. It then went for the license plate, kicking and scratching it in a futile attempt to remove it. But the letters and plate did not budge, easily recognizable for the first cop to verify when they were called.

The demon in the mirror turned its back on the flame, preparing to run all the way to its grave. But it only got a couple steps when it was overwhelmed by the strain inside its head, falling to the ground as all the energy left its body.

When it came to, the flame was still there, though much dimmer. Every ache and pain in its mind and body prevented it from moving, the cold wet layer of grey slush beneath sapping it of its strength. The best it could do was turn its head away from the flame so that it did not have

to look at her, and even this caused the world to swirl in the demon's dimmed vision.

"I am too tired," the demon in the mirror groaned.

"I am too tired to care about the queer statecraft in sex toys and *hijrās*. I am too tired to care about role models for His supposedly queer family members. I am too tired to care about Palestine and Israel and Chittagong. I am too tired to care about the bounties of heaven. I am too tired to care about its rivers of milk and honey. I am too tired to care about its houses and thrones of gold. I am too tired to care about its exotic fruit. I am too tired to care about its immortal servants and perfect spouses.¹⁸ I am too tired to care about you. Everything that once made me happy is destroyed and there is nothing left in this world or the next that will ever fix it. The only thing I want is to sleep in complete silence forever in a dreamless void until the end of time."

The demon waited for her response.

It waited, and waited, and waited.

It turned to the flame, but she was not there. It looked to the shadows cast by the car, expecting one of the *shayāṭīn* to say something. It saw something stir for a moment, but nothing happened. None of the voices remained, only the low crackling of a secret which no longer existed, in this world or the next.

Ch 9 Notes

¹ *Tuhfatush Shabaab – A Gift for the Youth* (Isipingo Beach: Jamiatul Ulama [KZN] Ta'limi Board, 2016), p. 67–69, <https://jamiat.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/tuhfatush-shabaab.pdf>.

² Note that Weber's queer logics of statecraft relies upon Roland Barthes's concept of the pluralized and/or, which is confusing, so there might be a misinterpretation: Cynthia Weber, *Queer International Relations: Sovereignty, Sexuality and the Will to Knowledge* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 10, 24, 42–45, 144–191.; Cynthia Weber, "Queer Intellectual Curiosity as International Relations Method: Developing Queer International Relations Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks," *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (2016): p. 19–21, <https://doi.org/10.1111/isqu.12212>.

³ Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, p. 300–304.; Jessica Hinchy, "Introduction," In *Governing Gender and Sexuality in Colonial India: The Hijra, c.1850-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 1–3, 14, 21–22.

⁴ Hinchy, "Introduction," p. 7–10, 16–17, 19.

⁵ Hinchy, "Introduction," p. 11, 22.

⁶ Hinchy, "Introduction," p. 12–14, 17–19.

⁷ To know more about the activism of Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, See: Florence, Ashley, and Sam Sanchinel, "The Saint of Christopher Street: Marsha P. Johnson and the Social Life of a Heroine," *Feminist Review* 134, no. 1 (2023): 39–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01417789231166827>.; Ruth Osorio, "Embodying Truth: Sylvia Rivera's Delivery of Parrhesia at the 1973 Christopher Street Liberation Day Rally," *Rhetoric Review* 36, no. 2 (2017): 151–63, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07350198.2017.1282224>.

⁸ "Verse (6:140) - Word by Word," *Quranic Arabic Corpus Word by Word Grammar, Syntax and Morphology of the Holy Quran*, accessed September 18, 2024, <https://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp?chapter=6&verse=140>.; Muḥammad Taqī-ud-Dīn Al-Hilālī and Muḥammad Muhsin Khan, trans. *The Noble Qur'ān: English Translations of the meanings and commentary* (Madinah: King Fahd Glorious Qur'ān Printing Complex, 2015), 6:140.

⁹ Al-Hilālī and Khan, *Qur'ān*, 6:151, 81:8–9, 17:31.

¹⁰ Note that for most Muslims, the sins of infanticide and filicide would probably include a broad range of acts, including those deemed "metaphorical." If a parent killed their infant or toddler or child or teen with a weapon or a flame, it is a sin. So too is dropping them from a great height. So too is leaving them alone in a forest or letting someone else kill them. So too is commanding them to kill themselves. So too is commanding them to play Russian roulette. So too would it be a sin to do any of these things while believing their child is lucky or strong enough to survive. If orthodox Muslims can accept all these acts as sins prohibited by verses 6:140, 6:151, 17:31, 81:8–9, why would most of them absolve themselves of the sin of driving their child to suicide? Do they somehow believe that beating a child or telling them that they are sinful or stupid or worthless or broken is any different from forcing them to play Russian roulette? Do they somehow believe that sending a child to ideologues that predictably increase their rates of depression and suicide is any different from letting someone else kill them? Do they somehow believe that ignoring conversion therapy's \$97,985 costs per individual is any different from pretending that a child is lucky enough to survive Russian roulette? Furthermore, if a parent makes their adult offspring play Russian roulette, the sin would be shared by both parties (the parent for abusing their authority to coerce their offspring to play such a game, the adult offspring for failing to exercise their autonomy to refuse). Why then is it a sin for an adult to leave their parents before their parent's ignorance and cruelty kills them?

¹¹ Yolande Knell, "Israel Conscript Rule Stokes Ultra-Orthodox Fury," *BBC News*, July 2, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c6p24expzd5o>.

¹² See: Nur Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of "Transfer" in Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992).

¹³ Arun Kumar Nayak, "Ethnonationalism in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh and India's Security Concerns in Northeast India," *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations* 27, no. 1 (2023): p. 38, <https://doi.org/10.1177/09735984231161726>.

¹⁴ Willem van Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, second edition (Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 245–246.

¹⁵ Jenneke Arens, "Genocide in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh," In *Genocide of Indigenous Peoples*, ed. Samuel Totten and Robert K. Hitchcock (United Kingdom: Routledge, 2011), p. 124, 126–127, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203790830-6>.

¹⁶ Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, p. 247–249.; Nayak, "Ethnonationalism in the Chittagong Hill Tracts," p. 36,

42–43.; Arens, “Genocide in the Chittagong Hill Tracts,” p. 120–121, 125–126.; Kabita Chakma and Glen Hill, “Chapter 5. Indigenous Women and Culture in the Colonized Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh,” In *Everyday Occupations: Experiencing Militarism in South Asia and the Middle East*, ed. Kamala Visweswaran (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), p. 132–133, 137, 141–143.

¹⁷ Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, p. 248, 250.

¹⁸ Al-Hilali and Khan, *Qur’ān*, 6:32, 43:70–73, 47:15, 55:70–76, 56:10–38.

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